1: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1938 AV7 Burusho AV7

THE BURUSHO OF HUNZA

sufficiently severe. Happily winter is short, two or three months at most, and for the rest of the year day and night are spent mainly out of doors.

The social culture of the Burusho of Hunza is as high as their material culture is primitive. Three centuries of Islam—they are now Ismaili heretics, having been Shiahs until three or four generations ago—have not induced them to veil or despise their indomitable women, nor to abandon the wholesome tradition of exogamy between their different clans in favour of first-cousin marriage. They are freer from superstition and fanaticism than any people east or west of whom I have heard or read. Whatever be the esoteric teaching of the Ismailis of which Professor Ivanov might tell, it concerns the Hunza peasant as little as the homoousian controversy disturbs the mind of the British schoolboy. He goes his way in cheerful confidence that hard work, fair dealing, kindly affection and generosity must be as well pleasing to God the Merciful, the Compassionate, as ritual prayer or ceremonial fast, and his dreams are not broken by over-anxious fear of Hell or hope of Heaven.

The fastidiousness and personal cleanliness of the Hunza peasant are remarkable. Close packed amongst the crowd at festivals or sitting on the threshing floor amongst the workers, or entertained in their hospitable houses, we were never distressed by human exhalations or molested by parasites. The drinking water is guarded with scrupulous care from pollution by man or beast. Men and women cooperate without embarrassment or restraint and no work is taboo for either sex, though for obvious reasons the heavier jobs of wall-building, irrigation and ploughing fall more naturally to the man, and the care of infants to the woman. But as soon as the father is allowed to handle his child, he will carry the baby proudly and tenderly out for its first airings, while boys and girls alike play with and watch over the toddlers.

Again and again, in face of the high morality and unquenchable spirit of the Hunzukuts, we were ashamed to think of what in our vaunted civilization 'man has made of man'.